

DNREC's First State Heritage Park to enliven The Green at the ninth annual 18th Century Market Fair

Dover – DNREC's First State Heritage Park's 18th Century Market Fair recreates the sights and sounds of eagerly anticipated events, and allows visitors to leave the 21st century behind for a few hours free of charge from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 3, on The Green. In the 1700s, The Green was the center of life in Dover, and the site of annual autumn market fairs. In past years at the fair, nearly 5,000 visitors chatted with living history characters, watched traditional artisans at work, and enjoyed comical interactive performances – all with an 18th-century twist.

Signora Bella – the Great Italian Equilibrist – brings to life the tradition of the travelling performer in the 1700s, as she juggles knives and flaming torches, while balancing on a rope and a giant ball. Back by popular demand will be “Dr. Balthazar and his Marvelous Miracle Medicine Show.” Dr. Balthazar offers audiences a “magical miracle medicine that cures everything from a common cold to death of two weeks' standing,” as he engages audience members in his performance. Rick Shuman, will demonstrate how to use a spring pole lathe to young and old, as well as offering his wares for sale. Basket weaving, spinning, and silhouette making are also among the trades visitors can see.

Returning this year will be Professor Horn's Punch and Judy Puppet Show, performing on the second floor of the Dover Century Club. This fun-filled show captures the wonder and pure imagination of childhood. Professor Horn's celebrated show is known to incite gales of laughter from audiences of

all ages. Children adore the amazing feats, slapstick comedy, and variety entertainments, and parents enjoy the nostalgic excitement this quintessential puppet show conjures from their own childhoods.

A recognized expert in early American glassblowing and a purist, Knightengale's Rest presents Gilson's glassblowing as a trade, as well as other sundry items. Learn about the tricks and techniques for making reproduction 17th and 18th century glassware, and perhaps purchase some of his wares. In addition, the Lewes Historical Society will be back again this year. The group has done extensive research, and will present everyone's favorite treat – chocolate. Visitors can view a demonstration of the 18th century chocolate-making process and literally “taste the past.”

Children can enjoy the many hands-on activities, engage in a military muster with the 1st Delaware Regiment or visit the free photo booth, where visitors can have their picture taken with fun props from the colonial era to create their Market Fair memories. Children will also have the opportunity to make slate buttons as was done in the 18th century.

To add to the historic atmosphere, fiddler Rick Hudson will be wandering The Green as the Market Fair Minstrel, playing his merry tunes. The Dover English Country Dancers will be both demonstrating and encouraging people to participate.

Modern day photographers can join in the competition to capture the best pictures in the Market Fair Instagram Photo contest. Winners will receive a 2019 Delaware State Parks Pass and the chance to be used in promotional material for Market Fair 2019.

The Dover Century Club will be transformed into the Market Fair Inn, offering delicious pulled pork and chicken sandwiches, beef hot dogs, home-style soups, vegetarian chili, autumn sweet treats, and beverages for purchase. In addition,

the club's garden study group will sell beautiful, handmade wreathes and table décor, with all proceeds benefiting the club's youth scholarship and building funds. Old World Breads from Lewes will be offering sweet treats for sale, including their famous shortbread and molasses cookies for the first time this year.

Admission to Market Fair is free. The event is rain or shine and will move to indoor locations around The Green in the event of inclement weather. Information about all the demonstrators and entertainers appearing at Market Fair can be found at www.destateparks.com/history/firststateheritage.

On Saturday, Nov. 4, three other local events will be held. From 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., the Biggs Museum of American Art will be hosting "Happy Birthday, Biggs Museum!" Visit www.biggsmuseum.org for more information. In addition, the city of Dover will host a special Veteran's Parade through downtown. The Delaware General Assembly, the Delaware Commission of Veteran's Affairs, and the Delaware Heritage Commission will host a dedication for a new monument on the grounds of Legislative Hall honoring Delaware Women in the Military. The event will be held at noon following the parade.

The First State Heritage Park is Delaware's first urban "park without boundaries," linking historic and cultural sites in the city that has been the seat of state government since 1777. The park is a partnership of state agencies under the leadership of DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation, working in collaboration with city and county government, nonprofit organizations and the private sector.

Media Contact: Sarah Zimmerman, DNREC Division of Parks and Recreation, First State Heritage Park, 302-739-9194 or sarah.zimmerman@delaware.gov.